

England and Germany would really be provoked by Germany. He at once answered that he had first-hand information which made him sure that Germany had no intention whatever of provoking a war, but that she did not intend to be at the mercy of any power; and that as her trade was growing, and her overseas interests growing, she believed it necessary to build up a big fleet. I mentioned that while President I had sounded, unofficially and informally, Germany and England as well as other powers to see if we could not limit the size of armaments, at least by limiting the size of ships; but had found that while all the other powers were willing, Germany and England would not consent; Germany taking the ground that the *status quo* put her at an improper disadvantage, and England saying—as I believe quite properly—that naval superiority was vital to her existence and that if Germany intended to alter the *status quo* she could not agree under any consideration to refrain from a policy of shipbuilding which would prevent such alteration from coming into effect. I added that while I had no proposition to make myself I did wish that the German authorities would seriously consider whether it was worth while for them to keep on with a building program which was the real cause why other nations were forced into the very great expense attendant upon modern naval preparation.

The minister asked me if I intended to speak about this in Berlin. I answered that I did not know, that

I could not tell whether or not the chance would arise. I of course expected him to inform the Berlin foreign office of what I had said, and indeed desired him to do so; but I had not expected what followed. Two days later the Berlin papers came out with semi-official statements to the effect that the Berlin foreign office had been informed that I wished to talk to them on the subject of universal peace and disarmament, but that they did not believe for a moment that I would be so lacking in understanding of the requirements of the situation as to take advantage of my friendly personal visit to broach a subject which would be very dis-